1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 /956 AS 14 Central China 47 x

(3)...The abolition of the feudal system of marriage, which neglects the interests of the children, and the putting into effect of the New Democratic system of marriage which protects the lawful interests of women and children.[1]

In propagandizing and implementing the Marriage Law, the regime struck hard against the old authoritarianism of the family, child marriages, maltreatment of women and discrimination against them as inferior to men, and the maltreatment of children by parents. Wives, especially wives of arranged marriages, were encouraged to seek divorce from cruel and unrepentent husbands. However, if husbands could be made to adopt the new attitudes toward women, partners of arranged marriages were urged to remain united.

To help traditionally [illegible] adjust to the new Communist-established [illegible] racy and harmony, family struggle meetings were arranged under cadre supervision. Each member was pressured to confess his own past sins and suffering and to help other family members to remember [illegible] particular transgressions. [illegible]

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11. Document [illegible]

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

condemnation, redress, and rectification were the mistreatment and beating of wives by husbands, similar behavior by mothers-in-law against daughters-in-law, and interference by parents in young people's free choice of marriage partners. Much was made in the Communist press of the suicides or murder of women and young people, attributed to "the old feudal system of marriage."[12]

Whatever the humanitarian by-products, the Marriage Law aimed at a basic change in Chinese society with two utilitarian purposes in view. One was to change the popular basis of loyalty from the family to the state. The other was to free the Chinese woman from her preoccupation with the home and children so that she might become a laborer in the field and factory. These aims were quite openly expressed.

For instance, an article in the Peking News Chung-kuo ch'ing-nien pao [China Youth] on the correct attitude toward parents, asserts that under the Confucian system with its emphases on filial piety, parents had the right to regard their children as private property and demand sacrifices of them. Under the new regime, the article pointed out, "children are not the private

12. See especially C.B., 273, pp. 1-8; 236, pp. 4-14; and Survey of the China Mainland Press, Hong Kong, American Consulate, 932, p. iv; hereafter cited as S.C.M.P. The same conditions apply to this source as to Current Background; see footnote 9.